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but must from their own observation be able to point out many of all the different kinds of inquisitorial agents mentioned among their present acquaintance, and be able to recollect many more in times past. They may, perhaps, call to mind their attempts to put them mentally on the rack (pray heaven their attempts may always be confined to the mind) to force the greater discoveries. And now that the clue is given, but small exertion will trace out various mazes of their hidden labyrinths which the bounds of this mode of communication does not permit to expatiate on as they deserve.

In concluding however, let me caution innocent and well-intentioned people against the attempts of this association to render them instrumental to their nefarious designs, and suggest the expediency of rendering it lawful to give false and misleading answers to all impertinent questions, at least for a season, as a means of checking and counteracting in some degree, the plots and contrivances of this inquisitorial conspiracy. NEM—S.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

SERAPH; OR VANITY REPROVED.

A Tale for the Ladies.

O, softly soothing stream!
That gently murmuring flows;
Whilst now the moon's mild beam
A paly radiance throws:
I love to steal along
In wild extatic dream,
And hear thy stilly song,
O softly soothing stream!

Along thy margin green,
Delightful 'tis to wander;
On heaven thus calm—serene—
Delightful 'tis to ponder:
While still thy murr'ring sound
Aids contemplation's dream,
Inspiring thoughts profound,
O softly soothing stream!

While thus removed afar
From folly, noise, and strife,
I feel no more the jar
Of thoughts that harass life;
Those cares that fill'd my breast,
Are fled like fever's dream!
Thou lull'st to peace and rest,
O softly soothing stream!

'TWAS thus Captain Lancaster poured forth his thoughts, as he rambled over his own grounds, one fine evening in June. He now set himself to compose an air for his verses, determining that his daughter should sing them as soon as he returned home.—While he is humming to himself for half an hour, among the trees, by the side of a stream that winds through his domain, we shall take that opportunity to give our readers some account of him.

Captain Lancaster was a younger son of a respectable family: his only wealth however at his first setting out in the world was a lieutenant's commission. Fate too, as if determined that he should remain poor, had decreed that he should fall in love with a woman as poor as himself. This was a trying situation: fearful of involving the object of his affection in a life of hardship, he struggled long against matrimony; but at length, after various proofs, on both sides, of constancy, affection, and virtue, they were united. For some years they bore up, and even flourished contentedly, amidst the chilling winds of poverty. Whether it was these gusts of misfortune which every year caused their hearts to cling closer together for support, or that they every year discovered in each other, more of those qualities which nature has commanded us to admire and esteem, we know not, but certain it is, their affection was constantly progressive.

The second year of their union

was blessed by the birth of a lovely girl ; and in the third, their felicity was still increased by that of a boy. They now sometimes wished for riches, on their children's account, but both sincerely felt that wealth could not add to their own happiness.

And if at any time Lancaster chanced to express regret at not being able to give his children as liberal an education as he could wish—“At least,” his Harriet would say, “we shall endeavour to educate them virtuously, and leave the rest to Providence. We will likewise endeavour to cultivate a taste for those simple pleasures and delights, which render their parents so uniformly happy, in spite, I may almost say, of fate. Though poor, we are respected ; we have friends whom we love, and by whom we are beloved : we experience vast delight, entertainment, and instruction, from reading of which we are particularly fond ; we enjoy a never failing source of amusement, and knowledge, in the beauties and wonders of nature ; and our souls feel such a dependence on the mercy, and goodness of nature's God, that we neither regret the past, nor fear for the future. What then do we stand in need of that riches can procure ? Oh nothing ! for the wealth of the Indies could not purchase such a child as this,” she would playfully add, clasping one of her infants to her bosom.

Five years had now rolled away, fraught, perhaps, with more happiness to Lancaster, than he could have enjoyed in any other situation ; when, contrary to his expectation, fortune seemed inclined to be in a good humour with him.

The regiment to which he belonged happening at this time to be quartered in a town where an old uncle of his resided, he went of course to

pay his respects to him, and the old man, who had no children, conceived such an affection for himself and family, that after some months acquaintance, he declared his intention of leaving him his sole heir.—This event appeared as if it would shortly take place, for the elder Mr. Lancaster's health had been for some time on the decline. As an earnest, however, of his future liberal intentions towards his nephew, he at present got him advanced to the rank of captain. Some time now elapsed very agreeably to all parties. Mr. Lancaster, owing, as he believed, to the pleasure he experienced in the captain's society, began to improve in health ; in consequence of which, he gave a splendid entertainment to his friends, and his nephew was introduced as his future heir. It was well known that he was immensely rich, therefore the captain and his Harriet were the idols of the night. His Harriet this evening, emerging as it were from obscurity, like the sun after a long bleak winter, delighted, animated, and attracted the gaze of all. I need not here interrupt my narrative, to make a true observation on the vanity and instability of all earthly pleasures. Alas ! a blow awaited poor Lancaster, for which kingdoms had they been showered on him, nor aught that this world contains, could in no wise make him a recompense. Mrs. Lancaster, who was in an early stage of pregnancy, after being overheated by dancing this night, caught a cold. For some time she thought slightly of it ; but at length she became alarmed by its continuation ; no art could remove her cough ; she lived just long enough to bring a delicate infant into the world, and three weeks after its birth expired ! her child soon followed her to the grave.

We shall not attempt to describe the widower's affliction.—What pen, what language, could paint that which had no words! no gestures! he was stunned, not maddened by the blow! had he possessed less religion, or less philosophy, he most probably had sunk under this silent despair of the heart! Alas! what does philosophy, unsupported by religion, avail us, in the trying hour of affliction? 'tis then indeed we forcibly feel our dependence on the Deity, and tremblingly cling to him for support!

Not long after the death of his niece, the elder Mr. Lancaster's health began again visibly to decline; since that event he had lost those pleasant conversations with his nephew, which had formerly contributed so much to raise his spirits, and keep him cheerful. Now when in company with the captain, he only felt for, and pitied him. Not long time therefore elapsed, before the captain saw his good uncle laid in his cold bed likewise. He left the bulk of his fortune to his nephew; who now found himself rich, without a relish for any of those pleasures that riches can purchase. Tired of the bustle of public life, he determined to seek contentment, if she were ever to be found by him, in a retired situation: in consequence of this resolution, he sold his commission, and went to reside on an estate which he possessed some miles from town; resolving to occupy himself in the education of his children, and agricultural pursuits.

Life to him had lost all charms, but by being a kind landlord, a humane master, and a generous friend to all, he hoped yet to prove the means of happiness to others. Nor was he mistaken, the blessings of the poor and afflicted followed his steps, whilst the respect, admiration, and love of all ranks for him,

were unbounded. But his chief delight centered in his children, and their instruction occupied a large portion of his time. He led them through the paths of learning in the gentlest, and most amusing manner; by a happy art of simplifying his language, and using similes and comparisons adapted to their capacities, he rendered that which would appear dry and obscure to most young minds, plain and easy to them. For the more superficial, (and in his estimation trivial), accomplishments of music, dancing, &c. they had masters from town. Indeed no labour or pains was spared in the cultivation of these two lovely blossoms; and early did they display tokens of that high degree of excellence which might be expected from them in a state of maturity. Their bodies and minds were formed in nature's most perfect mould. Harriet (the name of the girl) was beauty and grace personified; nor was the boy less charming: his mild large dark eyes, and high forehead, had somewhat sublime in their appearance; that capacious forehead bespoke judgement, fancy, and genius; while those mild, yet penetrating eyes, expressed benevolence and deep thought: his whole countenance and figure were equally prepossessing; and had Lavater beheld him, he must have exclaimed, "this boy is formed to act a distinguished part on the theatre of existence." How often has the fond father watched his children as they danced or gambled before him, like cupid and a younger grace, till tears swelled in his eyes, and he has been forced to turn away to hide his emotion! how often has he apostrophised their sainted mother, on beholding any excellence which he thought would have delighted her in them? And, Oh, how often has agony darted

through his brain, as he has thought, "She shall never, never, behold their virtues!" Six years passed away in this placid uniform manner; Captain Lancaster began to taste content, and cheerfulness again took up her abode in his mansion.

He could now without agony look stedfastly back on the misery he had past. As one who in the fury of a tempest has been struggling for life, at last finds himself safe on shore; he trembles at the dangers he has past, and his joy for his present safety is tempered with awe—he nevertheless feels it, and casts a grateful look to heaven.

Captain Lancaster was still in the full vigour and prime of manhood, being yet but thirty-three years of age. Those who have seen the famous Kemble play Hamlet, may form a tolerable good idea of his figure and face; indeed he was extremely like what Kemble looks in his best and most beautiful characters. But affliction had not yet emptied her quiver on him, nor had his countenance yet assumed that thoughtful air, which afterwards rendered him so like to the philosophizing Hamlet. He had now lived, as was mentioned before, six years in tranquillity, when his son was seized with an alarming illness, it was now feared that this boy, who greatly resembled his mother, inherited the delicacy of her constitution, yet the most vivid bloom of health had always flushed his cheeks, his father thought him a little Hercules; he therefore, from being entirely unprepared for it, felt the greater shock from his indisposition. Alas! who boasts of seeming health and strength? What is the most robust constitution? Has not the Almighty numbered the days of the children of men? This lovely, this enchanting beam, was quickly ex-

tinguished, leaving darkness impenetrable in the house of his father.

Again we must beg to be allowed to draw the veil over affliction, too poignant not to touch the feelings of every sympathizing reader. All the wretched parent said, as he caught the last breath of his expiring son was, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!" But did he feel less than those who rave, and rant, and tear the hair? Oh, no! The grief that does not speak,

"Whispers the woe-fraught heart, and bids it break!"

Too truly did poor Lancaster feel the truth of this, and to save himself, he fled from himself; he fled not to dissipation, his mind was superior to all its allurements; it was to society, to friendship he resorted, to banish his own thoughts. This mournful event entirely changed the tenor of his life; formerly he had delighted in solitude, delighted to muse alone; now madness lay that way—Behold him now therefore, that is some months after the death of his son, continually in company, and seldom at home. His daughter was therefore left entirely to herself. And did she now, 12 years old, not feel for the loss of her only brother, her companion, and play-mate? O, yes, she did indeed feel! nor was it the first time sorrow had entered her heart—though young, she had mourned the death of her mother, and her mind had retained a sombre cast ever since. Now in silence and solitude she wept her brother; but when her father appeared, she dressed her looks in cheerfulness, lest she should add to his affliction.

About seven months after the death of his son, a friend of the captain's advised him seriously to think of marrying a second time. This thought

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had never before suggested itself to him—Yet his friend's arguments to the following effect, had their weight: namely,—that he wanted society, his daughter wanted somebody to direct and instruct her; he wished to relish life; nor should he wantonly despair, or neglect any expedient that might be found to render it agreeable to him. Before the death of his son, he had felt an utter abhorrence to a second union, now his whole mind was changed. Thought was such torture, he was so overwhelmed in misery, that like a drowning wretch, he was willing to snatch at any thing to bear him up for a little. Enter the state of matrimony without love! that he would never do; could he be brought again to love, he would then marry.—Thus ended his cogitations on this important subject. In this disposition of mind he frequented the society of females more than he had ever done in his life. For a long time however all were alike indifferent to him, and only resorted to as the means of banishing his melancholy reflections.

Captain Lancaster with an enthusiasm for all that was beautiful, and a "quick disgust for what was disarranged or gross in species" did not, in his admiration for the beauties of nature, overlook the "human face divine;" though purified by grief, he was still a man, with all the feelings and passions of one; it need not therefore be wondered at, that his attention should be more bestowed upon the handsome than upon the ordinary part of the female sex.

It was his fate about this time to be introduced to a young lady so super-eminently beautiful, that all others by comparison with her, seemed but as twinkling stars to night's refulgent queen. Maria Godfrey, the name of this lady, though

possessed of but a small fortune was nevertheless of a very respectable family. She was extremely fascinating in her manners; in her disposition, she was gay and volatile; her conversation always abounding with vivacity and spirit. Crouds of admirers attended her steps; that many of them were real lovers, we cannot positively assert; this, however, is certain, as soon as Captain Lancaster appeared, she seemed to show him a decided preference. At first admiration alone attracted him to her; in her society, he found his time pass more agreeably than any where else, and at length she became in a manner necessary to him.—He considered himself already sufficiently rich; fortune therefore with a wife was no object to him. The lively disposition of Maria pleased him, it formed a contrast to his melancholy, and might, in time, he thought, succeed in banishing it from his mind. In short he saw no reason why a beautiful woman should not make as good a wife as a plain one; all he wished for was an agreeable companion, and sensible friend, and such a one he believed he had found.

His proposals of marriage after all due hesitation and demur on her side, were at length favourably received, and the nuptial day fixed. Before the ceremony took place, Harriet was brought from the country to see her mamma elect: she was kissed and caressed, and called the sweetest, loveliest, most interesting girl in the world.

Behold Captain Lancaster again embarked on the ocean of matrimony! that wonderful ocean which is either tranquil and delicious, or tempestuous and dreadful according to the dispositions and tempers of the mariners: it is universally allowed to be squally, however, and those who meet with favourable gales are bles-

sed indeed. Weeks and months now glided away imperceptibly, Cupid scattered pleasure and joy through the mansion which Hymen had blessed, and tranquillity again took up her abode in the breast of the bridegroom.

Upon nearer acquaintance, Captain Lancaster found that he had somewhat mistaken the character of Maria; her smiles proceeded less from good nature than the love of pleasing; and her consciousness of the superiority of her personal charms, made her haughty, and at times overbearing in her manners; in short he found that vanity was her ruling passion. This discovery gave him at first, but slight uneasiness for what woman is not vain, thought he? besides her beauty might almost plead her excuse, could any thing excuse vanity. Her love of admiration was indeed unbounded, for now, though a wife, she still expected the men to do homage to her charms. Long habituated to large draughts of flattery, that delicious poison so palatable to mortals, had corrupted her mind. The calm and peaceful delights of the country possessed no charms for her. Admiration, dress, and splendour, were the idols of her devotion. Soon the husband's idolatry of those charms that were every day familiar to him, declined; he began to think of her mind; for he wanted a friend to whom to unbosom himself. But where was this friend to be found? can friendship exist without some similarity in the sentiments of the parties? as well might he expect a reciprocity of sentiment in the most illiterate savage, as in a being whose whole time since she had arrived at years of discretion had been entirely occupied with balls, assemblies, and dress. Many laborious hours had he spent in hard study; his partner had never studied five minutes in

her life except the cut of a new robe or cap. Never before had he so forcibly felt the disadvantages of beauty to its possessor! a handsome woman without vanity, and possessed of mental endowments must be an angel! thought he!

All attempts to convert his wife into a rational friend proved abortive; when he strove to converse with her on the subjects most dear to his heart, she either understood him not, or showed an uneasy impatience that quite disconcerted him.

Finding the mind of his wife so dissimilar to his own, Captain Lancaster, applied himself with double assiduity to enlighten and expand that of his daughter: But even this, which had formerly been his darling employment now brought something unpleasant with it; for he soon perceived that on those days which he devoted most time to his daughter, Mrs. Lancaster appeared in a sullen, disagreeable humour. At first he attributed this partly to the state of her health, which was not very good. For amusement and the benefit of her health, he proposed a little excursion into Wales to Harriet and her, which was agreed to with alacrity by both.

Mr. and Mrs. Lancaster and the delighted Harriet set out soon after on their little tour, which they intended should last a fortnight. But before the half of that time was expired, Mrs. Lancaster complained of fatigue and wished for home; every art to amuse her failed, and this unpleasant humour threw a gloom on the whole party.

This change, however, was rather brought about by some little chagrin she had experienced in the course of their journey, rather than by fatigue, as she alledged.

At their first setting out, the Captain had pointed out to her every

object that struck him either by its beauty or sublimity, varying his discourse by descriptions he had read of the beauties and wonders that are to be met with in other countries. She listened, but seemed not much amused ; rural scenery possessed no charms for her. Harriet was not so ; accustomed to a country life, and to run, in a manner wild ; she was an enthusiastic admirer of nature. Latterly she had been reading "*Coxe's Travels in Switzerland*," and her mind being full of the book, she talked of it with animated delight, and attempted to draw comparisons between Switzerland and the country she now passed through.

Her father was pleased and astonished to find her so entertained, and entertaining ; they would sometimes hold conversations, in which Mrs. Lancaster took no part. At such times she once or twice said she found she was but an encumbrance to them, and wished they had left her at home.

One morning before they entered the chaise, as Harriet ran before them, to clamber up some rocks, the fond father could not help remarking what a brilliant bloom her cheeks had acquired ; that he thought she was improved very much of late, and how amazingly tall she was growing. "I think she is grown very tall indeed," said her mother-in-law, without replying to any other part of his speech. For the first time Captain Lancaster perceived his wife to be of a jealous temper ; it was with grief he made this discovery, from knowing what dreadful pangs such a disposition must occasion in the bosom that fosters it.

After returning from their tour, Harriet began to perceive that she was not much beloved by her new mother. The time was now fast approaching, when the Captain might

again expect the happiness of being a father, and to this event he looked forward with the most joyful hopes. At length Mrs. Lancaster was happily delivered of a daughter. On the Captain's paying his congratulatory visit to his lady, "look my dear" said she, "what a little cherub ! she is as beautiful as an angel." "Then we will give her an angelic name," said he, "she shall be called Seraphina after my mother." Accordingly in due time, the child was baptized by that name ; but the domestics either from the signification of her name, her beauty, or some whim always denominated her the Angel.

After the birth of her daughter, when Mrs. Lancaster again recovered her health and spirits, all was harmony and joy : Indeed, this child seemed a messenger sent from heaven to bring happiness to her father's house, she was so beautiful, so goodnatured, and so beloved, that smiles and cheerfulness for ever sported round her. Harriet just at that age, when dolls are thrown by, found her little sister to be an animated doll of which she never tired. She was unhappy if she spent a minute from Seraph, who very soon began to know her, and return her caresses. Mrs. Lancaster could not help being pleased by the extraordinary attachment Harriet manifested towards her child, and this caused her to behold her with a more favourable eye than formerly. The early marks of extraordinary intelligence which little Seraph displayed, were probably owing to Harriet's attention, who incessantly watched over her, and taught her something every day, while the animated countenance of the child lighted up by smiles of affection and gratitude, had expressed her thanks a thousand times before she could utter a word.

When Seraph could walk and

speak, it was with extreme reluctance on both sides, that the two sisters ever separated for a moment. Four years thus passed away in peace and harmony.

Harriet taught her sister to read before the generality of children know the alphabet ; indeed an astonishing precocity of understanding was visible in every action of this interesting and admirable child. It need not be wondered at, that the fond parents doted on her with the most lively affection, as did every member of the family. Nor was she in the least spoiled by all the fondness that was lavished on her : love inspires love, her little heart overflowed with kindness to all within its reach ; but the dearest object of her affection was still her sister : gratitude is one of the first sentiments of the human breast.

Harriet now in her sixteenth year, was grown tall and extremely beautiful ; the gentleness of her manners, together with the sweetness of her temper, *made* her beloved as soon as she was known. But the retiring bashfulness of her disposition induced her to shrink from observation and avoid company. She therefore knew nothing of the world, and was as innocent as little Seraph.

Captain Lancaster wishing to correct this timidity of disposition, fearful that it might prove injurious to his daughter in her progress through life, insisted that she should now be introduced into company. At first Mrs. Lancaster objected to this, saying, that she would be a woman, and feel the cares and anxieties of one time enough : she reluctantly complied however with her husband's request, and from that day, poor Harriet might date the commencement of her misery.

Little did her fond father foresee the consequence of this step ; little did he imagine that the foul fiend

jealousy would soon take possession of his wife's bosom, imbittering all his own days, and those of his beloved daughter.

Soon after this time, Mrs. Lancaster and Harriet happened to go one evening to the theatre in the neighbouring town. Several gentlemen, acquaintances of Mrs. Lancaster, came to pay their compliments to her ; among the rest Lord V. who had formerly been her admirer. It was once confidently reported that she would be Lady V. but in the mean time, Mr. Lancaster stepped in and bore away the prize. His Lordship had scarcely finished his first salutation, before he asked who the lovely angel was that sat beside her. — "O! Captain Lancaster's daughter, a mere child," said she. "I never saw so *tall* nor so beautiful a child in all my life," replied his lordship. "Will you have the goodness madam to introduce me to *it*." He was accordingly introduced, and for the remainder of the evening devoted himself to Harriet. Mrs. Lancaster was mortified ; but this was only the commencement of her chagrin ; for during the entertainment she could perceive that scarcely an eye was attracted by her charms, while those of her fairer daughter excited universal admiration. She complained of being ill before the play was over ; indeed she looked ill, and was in wretched spirits.

The next day in the absence of her father, Harriet received a long lecture on propriety of behaviour and the disgusting folly of children taking the air of women on them. Every succeeding day now brought with it, lectures to poor Harriet, which might with more propriety be termed scolds. Sometimes she was chid for appearing when visitors called, the nursery or school-room was much fitter for her ; at other times she was reprimanded if she

did not make her appearance; she absented herself merely to excite interest, and that a number of inquiries might be made after her. In short, she found it impossible to please her mother-in-law, let her conduct herself in what manner she would, or how irreproachable soever her behaviour might appear in the eyes of others.

(*To be Continued.*)

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

The following Petition and Answer, remind us of the favourable hopes excited and justified by the commencement of the French Revolution. They form a curious document worthy of preservation. The petition suitably states the peculiar doctrines of the Quakers, and claims protection for them. The answer of Mirabeau pronounces some sublime truths on the sacred right of private judgment, independent of the religion of the state, and forcibly demonstrates that opinions merely as such, where no breaches of morality appear, ought not to be cognizable by the legislature. Happy would it be if the liberal sentiments on this subject of religious opinions were interwoven as fundamental principles into all codes of laws, and formed a rule for the conduct of all sects towards each other, and also for the treatment of their own members, when diversity of opinion might happen to prevail among them.

THE RESPECTFUL PETITION OF THE
FRIENDS OF THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY,
CALLED QUAKERS.

*Delivered to the National Assembly,
10th of 2d mo. 1791.*

RESPECTABLE LEGISLATORS,

THE French nation having chosen
you its law-givers, and your

minds being disposed to give to her wise laws, our hearts have been lively excited to solicit your justice and beneficence on behalf of the society of the peaceable christians to which we belong.

You know that there exists in several parts of Europe and North America, a great number of christians distinguished by the name of Quakers, who profess to serve God according to the ancient simplicity of the primitive christian church:—There are in many towns and villages of Languedoc a number of families attached to this primitive christianity. Several families came from America to settle at Dunkirk, under the auspices of the former government, on an invitation given to the inhabitants of the island of Nantucket, with a view to extend the French fisheries. These Islanders have proved by their success, that they merit your favour, and the same exertions will cause them to continue to merit it; but interests far more exalted bring us this day before you.

In an age, wherein light hath made a rapid progress, you have discovered that conscience (the immediate communication of man with his Maker) cannot be subjected to the power of men. This sentiment of justice hath inclined you to decree general liberty to all worship. This is one of the most excellent decrees of the French legislation; you have given a great example to those nations who still persecute religious opinions, an example we hope they will follow sooner or later.

It is to this spirit of justice we apply for liberty peaceably to follow certain principles and maxims, which the great society of friends called Quakers have invariably supported since their earliest origin. One of these principles hath drawn upon us severe but unavailing persecu-